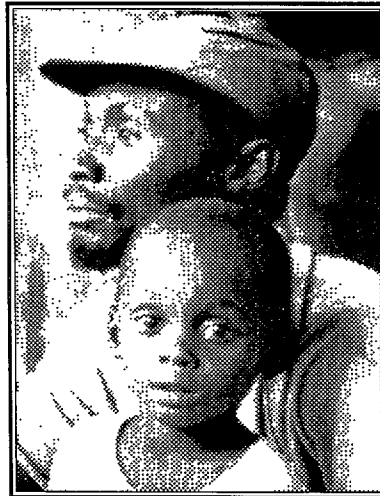

Weaving Gender in Disaster and Refugee Assistance



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 **InterAction.**
American Council for Voluntary International Action

**Commission on the
Advancement of Women**

Weaving Gender in Disaster and Refugee Assistance

Field Checklists

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*Photos: Hiram Ruiz, US Committee for Refugees
Artwork: International Women's Tribune Center, Inc.*

How we act, who we listen to, what we understand their strengths and weaknesses to be, who we decide to support and how, all of these are important ingredients which may make all the difference to the prospects of the people we are aiming to assist, both immediately and perhaps more significantly in the future.

-Judy El-Bushra
ACORD, UK

Disasters and complex emergencies are not gender neutral. Over the past decade, development professionals have learned that using gender checklists as part of the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of field projects enhances effectiveness and equity in programming. In preparing their organizations to provide effective relief assistance, disaster and refugee assistance agencies require tools that allow them to take into consideration women's and men's differing vulnerabilities and capabilities, and to identify the impact of gender issues on their relief programs.

To contribute to improved integration of gender analysis in disaster and refugee assistance, InterAction has developed this booklet as a compendium to *Weaving Gender in Disaster and Refugee Assistance*, a report based on two 1998 workshops. InterAction member agencies and donors shared experiences and lessons of effectively enabling women and men to be full participants and beneficiaries in humanitarian and refugee assistance.

This compendium of *Field Checklists* includes a set of tools that workshop participants recommend as part of an effective strategy for gender sensitive programming in complex emergencies. Please use these checklists as part of your work in the field and share them with your colleagues. The use of these checklists and other dedicated efforts will help to achieve our goal of truly weaving gender into our work.

*Commission on the Advancement of Women
October 1998*

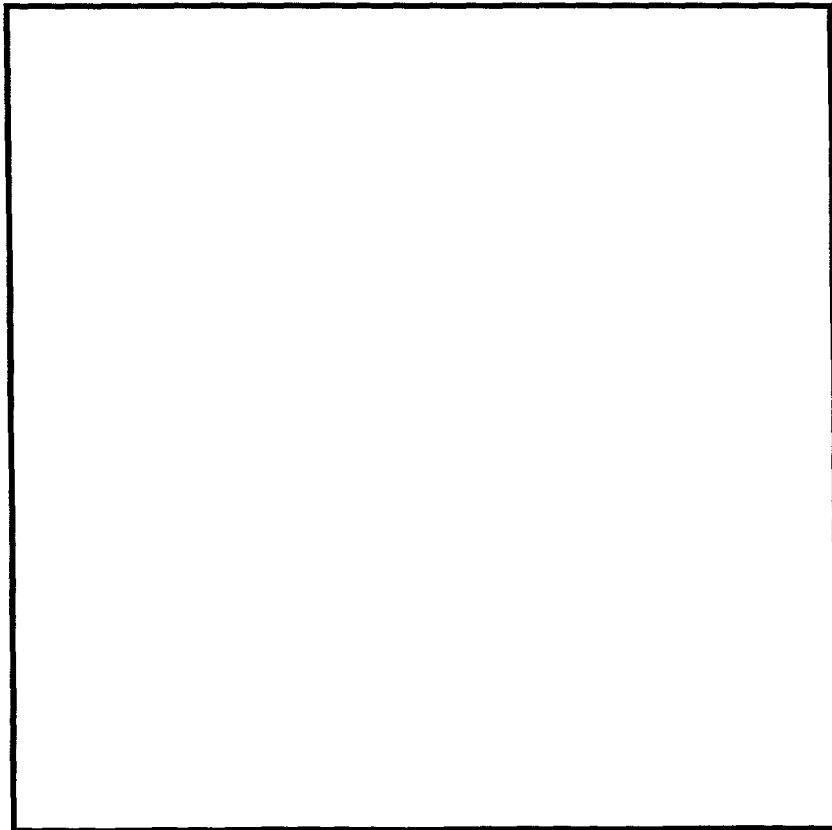
Table of Contents

<i>Program Goals Checklists</i>	<i>1</i>
Checklist for the Development of Gender Sensitive Goals in Disaster and Refugee Relief Efforts	2
Checklist for the Development of a Gender Sensitive Scope in Disaster and Refugee Relief Efforts	4
<i>Project Design Checklists</i>	<i>5</i>
Checklist for Designing More Effective Gender Sensitive Relief Efforts	6
Preparedness Checklist for Design of Relief Effort in Complex Emergencies	8
<i>Organizational Structure Checklist</i>	<i>9</i>
Organizational Structure Criteria for Meeting the Needs of Women in Complex Emergencies	10
<i>Gender Roles Checklist</i>	<i>11</i>
Checklist for the Identification of Gender Roles and Needs in Complex Emergencies	12
<i>Health Checklist</i>	<i>13</i>
Health Checklist for Internally and Externally Displaced Persons	14
<i>Sexual Violence Checklists</i>	<i>15</i>
Treatment Protocol for Sexual Violence in Complex Emergencies	16
Strategies for the Provision of Efficient Services for the Survivors of Sexual Violence	18
<i>Development Lessons Checklist</i>	<i>19</i>
Lessons Learned from Development Checklist	20

Program Goals Checklists

The following two checklists were developed from the experience based on recommendations of refugees and displaced persons. They argue that a relief effort designed strictly to provide basic needs like food, water and shelter lends only partial assistance to the gender based realities refugees and displaced women and men face in the wake of a complex emergency.

Field Notes

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***Checklist for the Development of Gender Sensitive
Goals in Disaster and Refugee Relief Efforts***

- _____ Dignity and self-esteem
- _____ Independence
- _____ Comprehensive health
- _____ Self-sufficiency
- _____ Sustainable skills training



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***Checklist for the Development of a Gender Sensitive
Scope in Disaster and Refugee Relief Efforts***

_____ Programming beyond basic needs like food, water and shelter.

_____ Programming with gender and cultural differences in mind in all phases of the assistance.

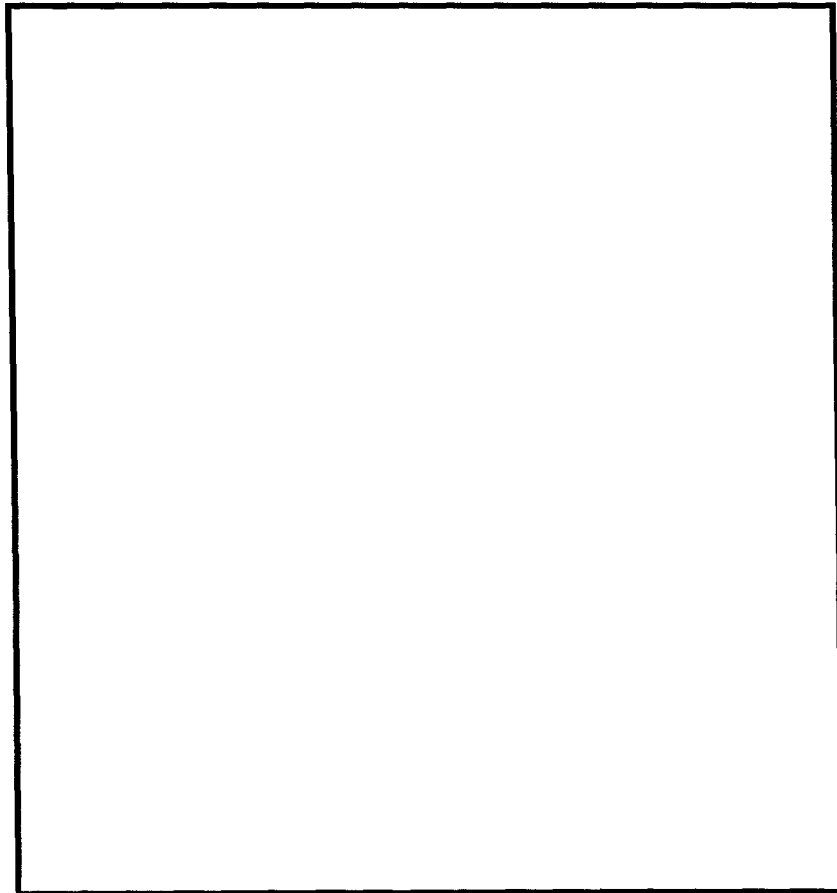
_____ Wide dissemination of information on refugee and displaced persons' legal rights to the affected persons.

_____ Wide dissemination of information on refugee and displaced persons' legal rights to field staff.

Project Design Checklists

The following two checklists were developed to help project planners and managers integrate gender in the design of humanitarian and refugee assistance projects.

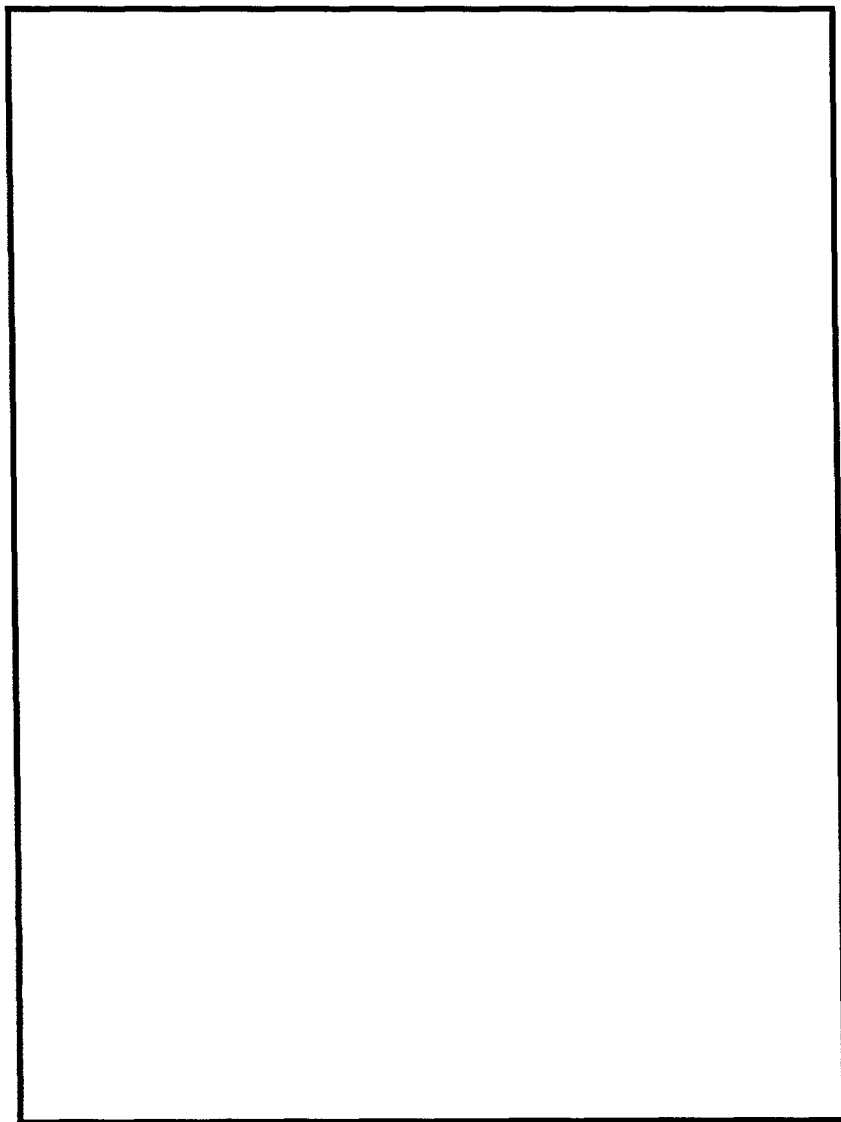
Field Notes

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Checklist for Designing More Effective Gender Sensitive Relief Efforts

- _____ The structure of the assistance is based on input from displaced persons, particularly women.
- _____ Gender sensitive rapid assessment checklists are utilized at the onset of the emergency.
- _____ Identification of gender roles and needs.
- _____ The relief effort strengthens the process of sustainable development.
- _____ The relief effort includes assistance specifically targeted at female and male adolescents.
- _____ The relief effort includes the widespread announcement of all distributions and other service provision to all displaced persons in the affected area.
- _____ The relief team has been trained in gender analysis.
- _____ The relief team includes a staff person proficient in gender and culture assessments.
- _____ The relief effort includes interventions that educate female and male refugees and displaced persons on the services available to address sexual assault and sexual violence.
- _____ The relief effort educates women on where to go and what to do in case of sexual assault and sexual violence.
- _____ The relief effort includes the dissemination of information to women on what to do when their needs are not being met.
- _____ The relief effort maximizes involvement of women and men in all aspects of relief activities.
- _____ The relief effort is designed to address male loss of self-esteem in complex emergencies.

Field Notes



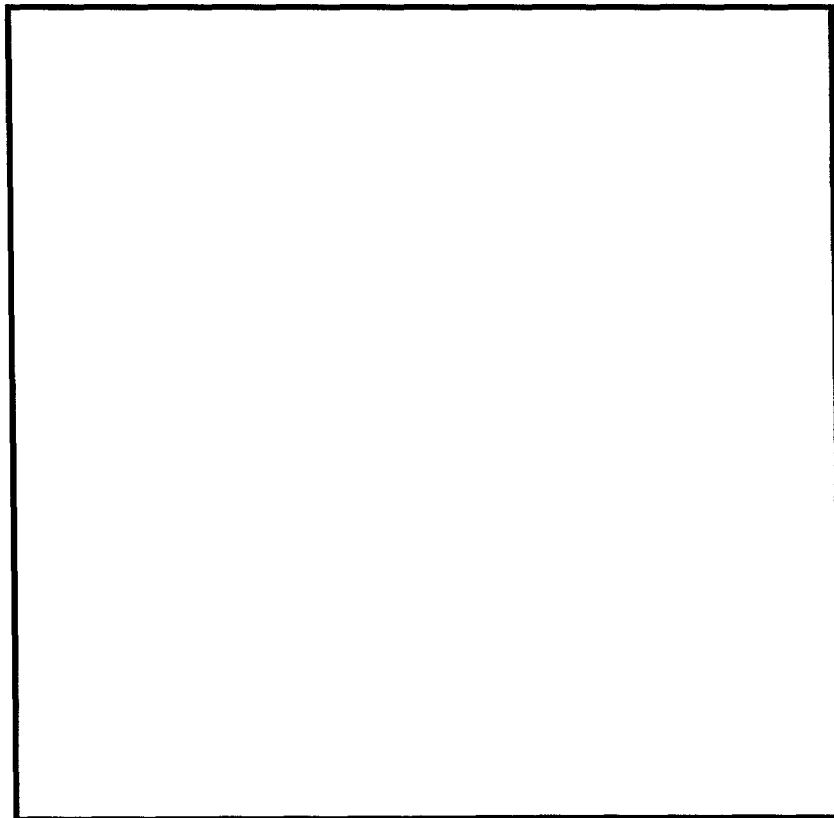
Preparedness Checklist for Design of Relief Effort in Complex Emergencies

- _____ Listen to affected people, both female and male.
- _____ Institute staff development program.
- _____ Invest in research on social structure and gender relations in likely regions.
- _____ Invest in networking with women's organizations and other community based organizations.
- _____ Integrate equal access principles for females and males for implementation in refugee camp administration.
- _____ Incorporate knowledge of female and male needs and vulnerabilities in camp design and security set-up.
- _____ Integrate equal access principles for females and males in design of registration and the distribution of relief goods.
- _____ Incorporate knowledge of female needs and vulnerabilities in treatment of rape survivors.
- _____ Integrate equal access principles for females and males in design of income-generating activities.
- _____ Incorporate knowledge of female needs and vulnerabilities in maternity provision.
- _____ Integrate equal access principles for females and males in design of sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS services.
- _____ Integrate equal access principles for females and males in design of agriculture projects.

Organizational Structure Checklist

The following checklist emerges from lessons learned about the impact of gender on disaster response in the United States. Gender and disaster expert Dr. Betty Hearn Morrow of Florida International University, proposes the following organizational structure criteria and argues that organizations which meet the criteria are more likely to design relief programs that effectively address the gendered dimensions of disaster response.

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Organizational Structure Criteria for Meeting the Needs of Women in Complex Emergencies

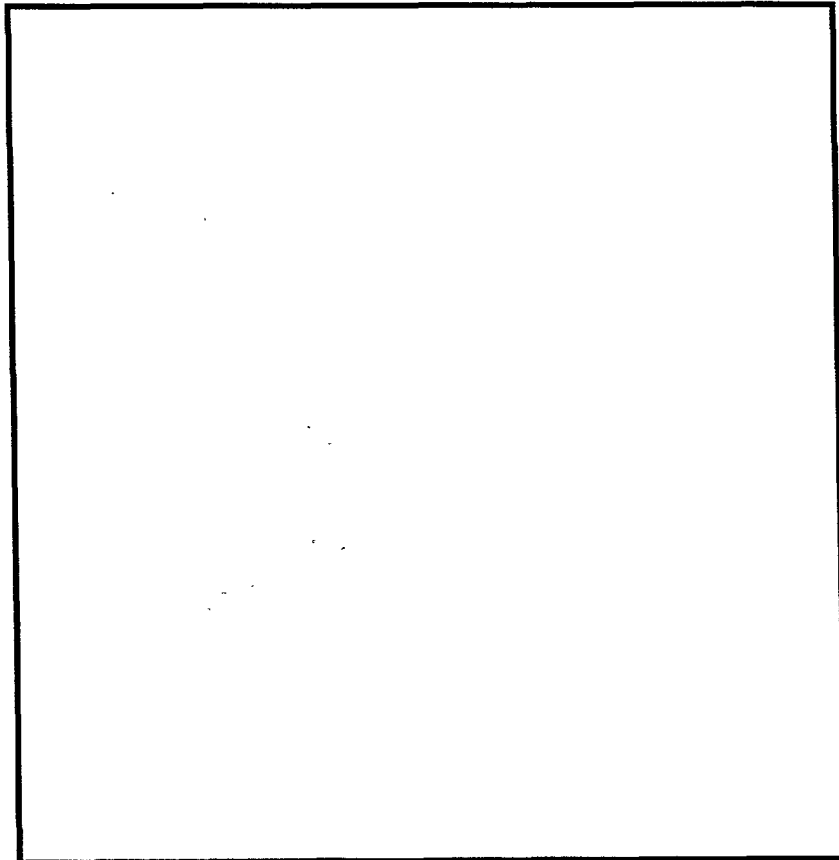
- _____ The structure of the relief organizations is inclusive.
- _____ The structure of the relief organization is minimally hierarchical.
- _____ The structure of the relief organization listens to women's voices in ways that matter.
- _____ The structure of the relief organization provides ample room for minority opinion and new ideas.
- _____ The structure of the relief organization employs researchers trained in observation, open-ended interviewing, focus groups, and other qualitative methods.



Gender Roles Checklist

The following checklist, also designed by Dr. Morrow, is useful in identifying the significant gender differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities in communities as well as the accompanying vulnerabilities and capabilities they bring to the relief effort.

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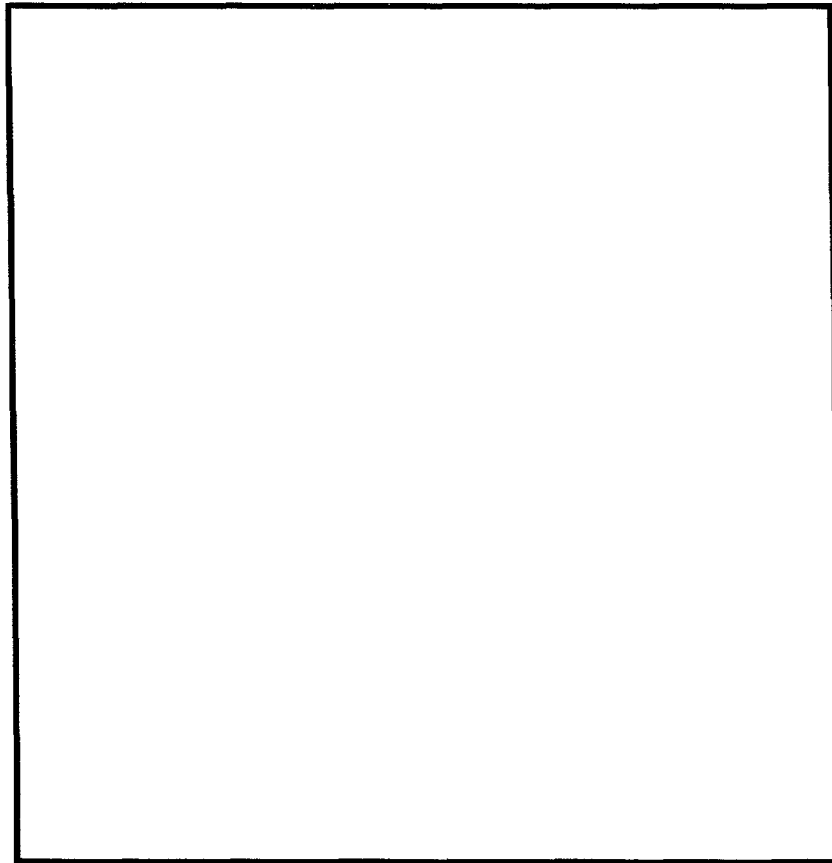
Checklist for the Identification of Gender Roles and Needs in Complex Emergencies

- _____ Who is getting the supplies? More importantly, who is missing from the distribution lines?
- _____ What gender roles are evident for the different cultural groups affected? How can programs be tailored to address them?
- _____ What is the structure of local households? Who lives together?
- _____ What are the lines of household authority? Who does what in the household?
- _____ How are resources allocated within the household?
- _____ How can our response programs work through these lines of authority to reach women?
- _____ Are girls at greater risk for receiving less food, and medical care.
- _____ Where are the elderly women? Who is caring for them?
- _____ What are the external networks of support -- family, religious groups? How can these be effectively utilized and strengthened?
- _____ How should resource distribution and other response programs be tailored to strengthen, not weaken, local networks?
- _____ How can women's networks be effectively utilized?
- _____ What can be done to help men deal more effectively with crisis which threaten their perceived roles and identity?
- _____ What "invisible" economic enterprises of women have been disrupted or destroyed?
- _____ How can we account for losses in the informal economy and home-based work?

Health Checklist

The following checklist was designed based on the experience of refugees and displaced persons with health care services during complex emergencies. The checklist allows for the development of a broader scope of health service programming in humanitarian assistance.

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Health Checklist for Internally and Externally Displaced Persons

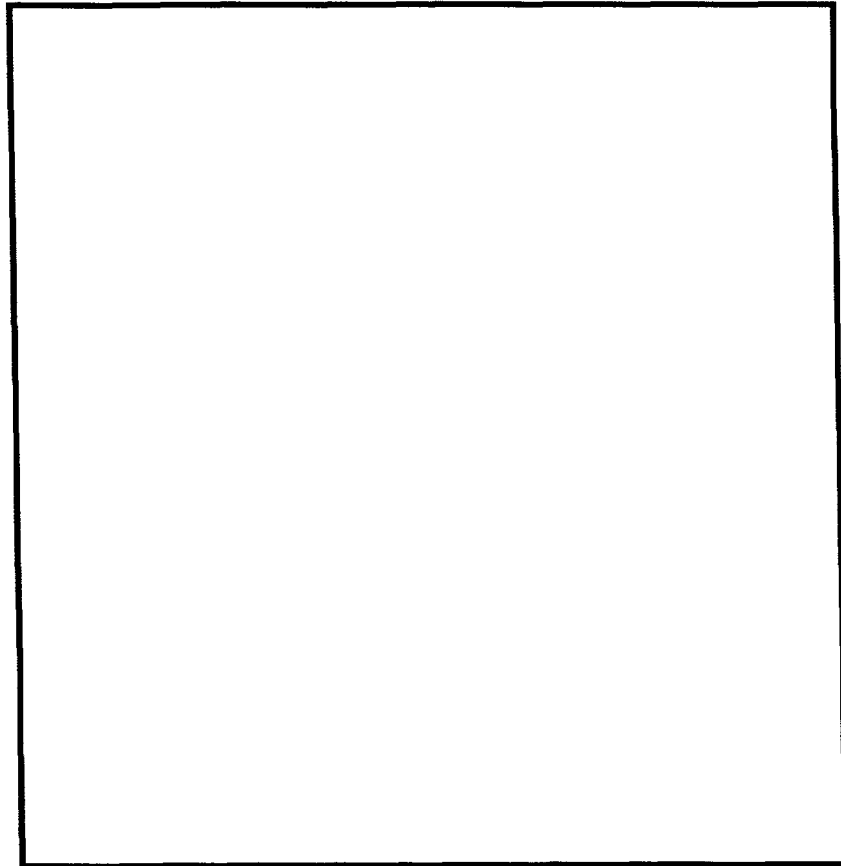
- _____ Level of host country health infrastructure is adequate for health needs of local as well as displaced person's health needs.
- _____ Reproductive health assistance is considered on par with other assistance such as food and water.
- _____ Arrangements are made to address displaced persons inability to pay for needed health services.
- _____ Reproductive health service is conceptualized as a comprehensive health strategy for women and their children, not simply as family planning.



Sexual Violence Checklists

The following two checklists designed by Loreli Goodyear, Reproductive Health Program Officer at the International Rescue Committee, provide a protocol and a set of strategies for meeting the needs of victims of sexual violence in complex emergencies.

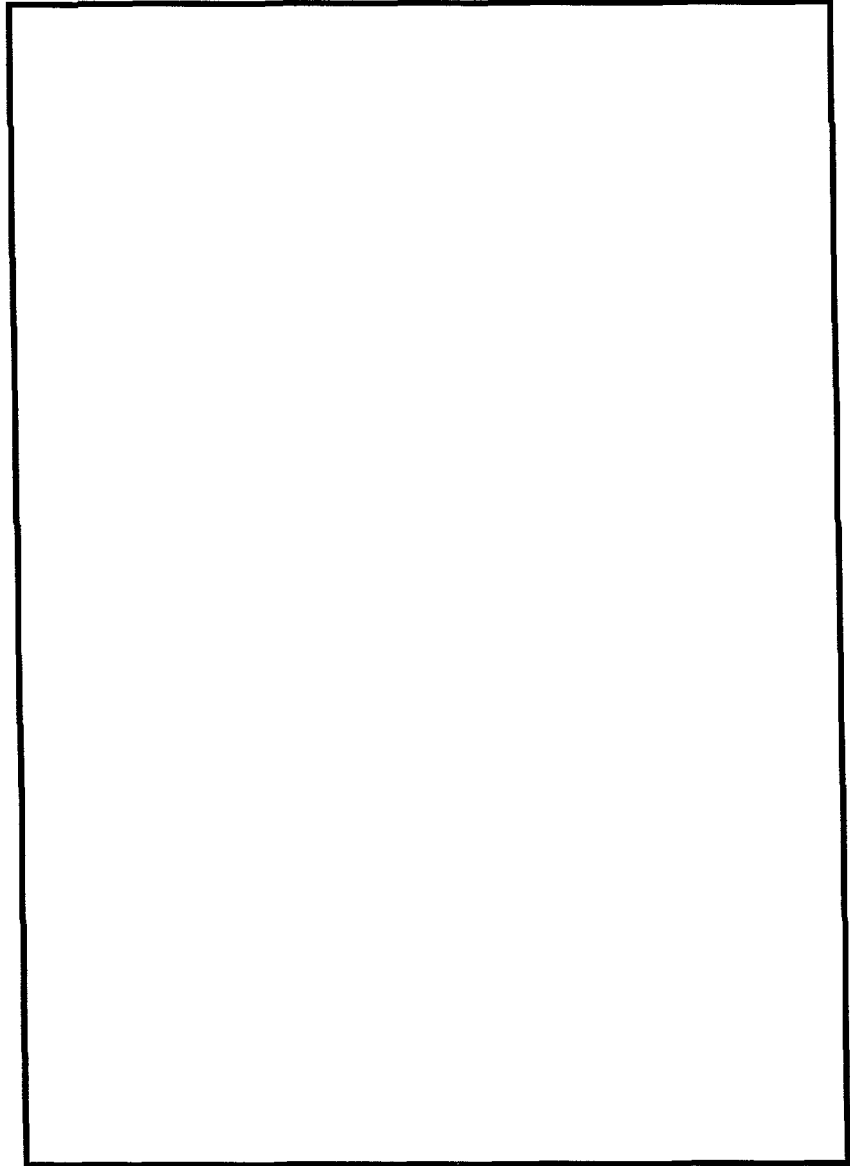
Field Notes

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***Treatment Protocol for Sexual Violence in Complex
Emergencies***

- _____ Assess injuries and treat wounds.
- _____ Provide pain relief medication.
- _____ Document injuries for evidence.
- _____ Provide prophylactic sexually transmitted infection (STI) treatment.
- _____ Counsel on emergency contraception.
- _____ Treat or refer abortion complications.
- _____ Refer to UNHCR for legal follow-up.

Field Notes



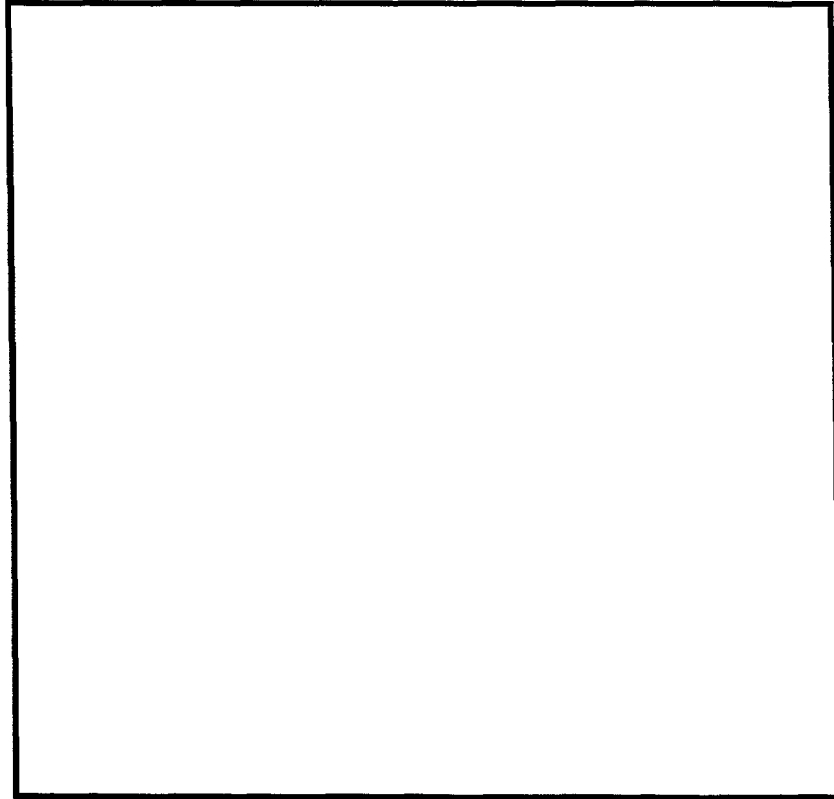
Strategies for the Provision of Efficient Services for the Survivors of Sexual Violence

- _____ The best interest of the survivor should be the leading principle in the provision of services.
- _____ Confidentiality is essential.
- _____ Reporting is critical to the gaining of support from affected refugees.
- _____ Sexual violence services should be provided from the point of first contact.
- _____ Social Workers and Reproductive Health Coordinators should be posted in refugee camps.
- _____ Key informants are useful in the collection of information on the extent of sexual violence.
- _____ The reproductive health and counseling infrastructure in urban settings can be useful in providing services.
- _____ Staff should be oriented to sexual violence prevention and responsive guidelines.
- _____ Medical protocols adopted for the local context should be designed.
- _____ Sexual violence questions should be included in assessments.

Development Lessons Checklist

The following checklist comes from lessons learned through development professionals' efforts to integrate gender in development projects. Jennifer Sime, a Development Project Analysts with Catholic Relief Services, suggests that these lessons are not only useful insights, but can be adapted effectively and with significant results to disaster and refugee relief efforts.

Field Notes

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Lessons Learned from Development Checklist

- _____ Involve women early and don't wait until the emergency phase is over.
- _____ Work with indigenous women's groups, they reach women effectively and women know and trust these groups.
- _____ Involve women in income generation projects that help them make a living and feed their families.
- _____ Let the targeted women decide what types of activities should be implemented in their communities. In so doing, there is a reduction in their dependency on humanitarian assistance and an increase in women's decision-making roles.
- _____ Focus on capacity building, always keeping in mind that skills are transferable and women in complex emergencies can make use of their skills in different settings.

Field Notes

